

Minutes of the Montpelier City Council Meeting

August 8, 2012

City Council Chambers, Montpelier City Hall

Present: Council Members Golonka, Timpone, Weiss, Guerlain, Hooper, Jarvis, City Manager Fraser, Mayor Hollar. City Clerk John Odum acted as Secretary of the Meeting.

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

- 12-193. At 6:32, Councilor Weiss moved to approve the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Councilor Timpone and passed unanimously.
- 12-194. City Manager Fraser briefly noted that there had been no alternate to the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission for a while. Councilor Timpone moved that Kim Cheney be appointed as alternate. Councilor Hooper seconded. The motion passed unanimously at 6:34.
- 12-196. The City Manager reviewed the process of moving the new parking ordinance proposed by Chief Tony Facos (regarding disabled persons parking) forward to this point, noting that it was approved at the last meeting, making this the vote for final approval. Councilor Jarvis moved for approval and was seconded by Councilor Timpone. The motion passed unanimously at 6:36.
- 12-195. Carl Johnson – Chair of the Budget Review Committee – addressed the Council. He reported that the committee had broken into many subcommittees and were making good progress. He indicated the committee would have some amount of municipal-to-municipal comparative information, where appropriate. He indicated the committee may require up to two weeks beyond the originally tasked deadline of September 17th to complete its report.
- Councilor Timpone expressed her feeling that the committee should not deviate substantially from its designated task, as other committees have done, and wanted to be sure the committee stayed open to input from the Council. Councilor Golonka inquired into what general budgetary areas the committee was looking. He felt that there seemed to be a good mix of approaches to the analysis underway.
- Councilor Weiss spoke highly of the quality of minutes generated from the meetings.
- The Mayor indicated that he had spoken to the School Board Chair about the committee's desire to look at the Recreation Department's budget, and that the Chair was comfortable with the committee doing so. Councilor Guerlain asked whether the Vermont League of Cities and Towns collected much of the comparative data the committee was looking for, and whether there was any talk of standardizing metrics to facilitate easy comparison. Johnson indicated that there are such discussions.
- 12-179. The City Clerk answered questions raised at the previous meeting about the proposed ordinance for outdoor commercial seating on city sidewalks. After addressing the technical questions, he noted the recent press coverage on the matter (as well as 2 recent complaints received in the Clerk's office regarding difficulties navigating the State Street sidewalks) and suggested the final policy be folded into a package of licensing ordinance changes he was working on, to be presented later in the year. The Council agreed.

12-198. Councilor Weiss spoke in support of forming a Charter Review Committee, and could be tasked to analyze items to be deleted, amended or added, as per the language used in the Goals. The City Manager suggested a committee of seven, and Councilor Weiss amended his recommendation that the Council approve formation of a committee not to exceed seven Montpelier residents and direct staff to advertise for interested potential committee members. Councilor Weiss hoped the committee could provide the legislature with proposed charter changes in 2014 after public meetings in September of 2013. This would be possible with Council action coming during August of 2013 based on the receipt of committee recommendations on or around July of the same year.

Councilor Guerlain moved that the Council form a charter review committee per the outline described by Councilman Weiss. Council Hooper seconded. The motion carried unanimously at 7:03.

12-199. Councilor Timpone noted that the deadline for the State Street Slam was Monday.

Councilor Guerlain passed on a request from Gallison Hill Road residents that the existing streetlights remain and that 2 more be added. He noted that a letter to that effect had been signed by most neighborhood residents.

10-200. The Mayor noted that he was at a recent Vermont Mountaineers game representing the city, where the team was honored. He also noted meeting with the Bike path Committee and VTrans in regards to a reworked bike path route proposed to minimize traffic concerns. He noted that there will need to be discussions with railroad authorities, but is reasonably hopeful that it can be done.

12-201. The City Clerk noted that the Board of Civil Authority had elected Mayor Hollar as its Chair, and that the valuation grievance process was currently underway.

12-202. City Manager Fraser reported there were many applications for the Assistant City Manager position, and that he would not rush to move forward given that the Budget Committee may need more time to develop its report. He also reported that District Heat and the Carr Lot continue to be worked on, with much information to come.

On questioning from Councilor Guerlain, Fraser indicated that revised cost estimates for District Heat should become available on the 16th or 17th, and that he was meeting with Synapse regarding their study on Friday.

12-203. City Manager and the Mayor have been systematically addressing the Goals over time. On the budget goals, the plan is to have preliminary working numbers in early September. Road conditions and costs are also being looked at. The combination of data should be enough to begin considering specific service cuts, and then be informed by the budget committee report later in September. Fraser noted the possibility that the budget committee may now need more time, which could impact the timeline.

Fraser noted the passage of the Community Fund Plan, the status report on the Matrix plan, and the fact the the Capital Projects Committee will need to be reconvened.

Councilor Weiss moved that the City Manager's report be received by the Council. Councilor Hooper seconded. The motion passed unanimously at 7:15.

Fraser briefly reviewed the timeline on the ongoing reapportionment process, noting that at the next meeting there will be an ordinance created. The City Clerk will publish the ordinance, and a

second meeting will follow, which will allow it to be considered on the ballot. Councilor Weiss complimented the reapportionment noting that its members (and map resources) could be of help with the process going forward.

Mayor Hollar noted he was working with staff to expand use of the website, enhance communication with constituency groups, and utilize social networking platforms. He invited thoughts and input.

Councilor Guerlain asked the City Manger how responsive Green Mountain Power had been in regards to dual utility poles. He encouraged the City Manager to push them assertively.

At 7:20, Councilor Guerlain moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilor Golonka seconded. The motion was approved unanimously and without discussion.